



March 8, 2019

Dear Council Members Bagshaw, Gonzalez, Johnson, Mosqueda and O'Brien

You wrote to me and other House members in support of legislation which, as initially proposed and as being redrafted, would preempt the City of Seattle in regard to important land use decisions, including some which the Council has recently adopted in pursuing greater density and housing choices. Thus, I am particularly surprised by your unqualified support for HB 1797.

Seattle has spent considerable time, for example, adopting a Preferred Alternative to allow DADUs on lots above 3,200 square foot, and adopting small lot ordinances to increase infill density with lots as small as 2,500 square feet. In that discussion, assurances were made about lot coverage. HB 1797 as introduced, would have required Seattle to allow one additional attached and one additional detached unit up to 1,000 square feet each on every one of these small lots - regardless of lot size; barred the City from ensuring units are not built for short term rental; barred parking requirements (even for short term rental use); required approval of ADUs up to 24 feet tall to the property line of properties with alleys (in contrast with the City's Preferred Alternative which starts height limits at 14 feet), limit impact fees...

Proposed amendments to require that the ADUs actually serve affordable housing have not been acceptable to key proponents, e.g., allowing cities to require that owners renting ADUs under these provisions accept Section 8 vouchers or other noncash housing supports; or, to allow cities to use their business licensing authority to regulate conditions for units sought to be used for short term rental businesses.

We were informed that Council Members supported the Proposed Substitute which would have applied these preemptive rules ONLY to the City of Seattle. Since a majority of the Seattle City Council has signed onto the letter, I must ask why you would want me to support and move legislation applicable only to Seattle, when an apparent majority of the Council says it supports specific policies in the bill?

Why would you ask me to support legislation that overrides and preempts you from adopting the proposals in your own Preferred Alternative for an ADU ordinance?

**If Seattle's Council supports these policies, you should (and do) have the ability to adopt them.** Supporting preemptive legislation appears to be at odds with asking the Seattle Delegation to support elimination of bars to Seattle being able to make its own decisions in regard to rent stabilization and many other sensible policies.

Seattle's 2019 official legislative agenda opens discussion of planning and land use stating that: "Seattle supports local authority to impose development impact fees... and to require appropriate infrastructure, such as open space and sidewalks, associated with new development."

**The crucial principle is local authority.** I have consistently supported allowing Seattle to make its own decisions. It should be your choice. Let's stay united on the principle that local governments should make the local decisions to govern themselves.

We have adopted statewide requirements to recognize we need to accommodate growth of our state's population and increase truly affordable housing for the many people whom the market will not serve. HB 1923 works within that framework and provides choices – to be made locally to reach those goals for density and providing affordable housing.

However, funding was stripped out of HB 1923 to pay for the considerable expense it would impose on local governments. Key proponents oppose efforts to ensure that you and other local governments have local revenue authority to cover those costs. Therefore, a good number of my colleagues have joined me in noting our desire to work on the policies which local governments may adopt to meet identified needs for increasing affordable housing for populations who need this help - if the legislation includes funding or local authority to charge fees to cover these costs.

I am sure we agree that our policies and investments in housing should thoughtfully focus on serving the hardest to serve populations with the greatest need and least resources. Those needs may differ significantly across the state. ***I look forward to working with you to provide you with the tools and revenues you need to meet those needs in Seattle.***

Please feel free to discuss this with me at any time.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerry Pollet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Representative Gerry Pollet  
46<sup>th</sup> Legislative District;  
Chair, Local Government Committee

CC: Mayor Durkan,  
Council President Harrell,  
Council Members Herbold, Juarez, Sawant  
OIR Director, Lily Wilson-Codega